

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 72  
By McMillan

A RESOLUTION relative to child passenger safety awareness and procedures.

WHEREAS, a recent study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicated that motor vehicle air bags are performing very well overall and are responsible for an eleven percent (11%) reduction in driver fatalities in passenger cars, including a thirty percent (30%) reduction in fatalities in head-on crashes; and

WHEREAS, this same study found that passenger air bags increase the fatality risk to child passengers from infants to about age twelve (12), confirming NHTSA's long-standing guideline that the safest place for children of all ages is the back seat; and

WHEREAS, obviously, air bags need to be improved to enhance the safety of children; comprehensive measures will include technological advances to maintain the safety benefits of air bags, while decreasing their potential hazard to children; and

WHEREAS, as emerging technology for "smart air bags" is not yet operative, Tennessee consumers should be provided important information relative to passenger air bags and other aspects of child passenger safety in the interim; and

WHEREAS, NHTSA and the automobile manufacturing industry are working assiduously to provide adequate information to motorists relative to the inherent dangers of current passenger air bag systems for children under twelve (12) years old, even as they endeavor to

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design more highly visible warning labels for air bags until such time as “smart air bag” technology is available; and

WHEREAS, while these efforts are commendable, the State of Tennessee should take a more active role in informing Tennessee motorists about the inherent dangers of passenger air bags for children riding in the front seat of a motor vehicle; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that the State of Tennessee should initiate such action as we observe National Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week from February 9-15, 1997; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That this General Assembly most fervently urges and encourages the Department of Safety to promulgate and implement policies and procedures to adequately inform Tennessee motorists about child passenger safety precautions and procedures, including the dangers of passenger air bags for children riding in the front seat of a motor vehicle.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in order to accomplish the purposes of such informational program within existing budgetary resources, the Department of Transportation is urged and encouraged to incorporate such information relative to child passenger safety in the next and future editions of the driver license examination manual.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Department of Safety is urged and encouraged to provide training and instruction to driver license examiners and other personnel employed at driver license examination stations relative to child passenger safety precautions and procedures, in order that such examiners and personnel may verbally provide such information to persons taking the driver license examination or persons renewing their driver license.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Commissioner of Safety.

